

"Ribeau House"
Ste. Genevieve, Mo.

HABS No. Mo. 1114

HABS
MO.

97. SAIGEN

14-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

MULTIPLE
ADDITIONALS
FOLLOWING

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

W.T. Trueblood, District Officer
1520 Chemical Building, St. Louis, Mo.

Eugene L. Pleitsch, Deputy District Officer,
1592 Arcade Building, St. Louis, Mo.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
DISTRICT OF MISSOURI (NO. 1.)

HABS
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1114
PROJECT NO. 1114

"Ribeau House"

This house located in Ste. Genevieve Missouri was built in 1793 by Roy Bequette, one of the early French settlers in this section of the country.

In the early part of 1800 it was sold to John Joseph Ribeau a French gentleman.

This property has been in possession of the Ribeau family for the past three generations.

This is a one story log construction weatherboarded. High basement. Veranda on front and rear. Peaked gable roof. Log house was built of cedar and walnut.

Information Mr. Libey Ribeau,
Ste. Genevieve, Mo.

EUGENE L. PLETISCH.

EW

6/3/27

Addendum to
Bequet-Ribault House
(Ribeau House)
St. Mary's (New Bourbon) Rd.
Ste. Genevieve
Ste. Genevieve County
Missouri

HABS No. MO-1114

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REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

An addendum to:
Bequet-Ribault House
(Ribeau House)
St. Mary's (New Bourbon) Road
Ste. Genevieve
Ste. Genevieve County
Missouri

HABS No. MO-1114

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Addendum to BEQUET-RIBAULT HOUSE (Ribeau House)

HABS No. MO-1114

Location: St. Mary's (New Bourbon) Road, Ste. Genevieve, Ste. Genevieve
County, Missouri

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The following information was recorded by Alexander Piaget and Charles van Ravenswaay at the time the photograph was taken:

Built ca. 1785. "The Ribault House next to the Amoureux House, was built by Ste. Jemme for a son, later sold to John Ribault." (Mrs. Ida M. Schaaf to C. van Ravenswaay, August 1937). Mrs. Jules F. Valle and Miss Vogt say the Ribault House was built by Ribault about 1785.

Creole, poteaux en terre. Originally had galleries on four sides and white washed plaster walls. Original en queue d'aronde shutters preserved.

PROJECT INFORMATION

The Piaget-van Ravenswaay Survey consists of a number of photographs, primarily of sites and structures in Missouri, which were taken before 1938 by Alexander Piaget and after that by Paul Piaget, both in conjunction with Charles van Ravenswaay. Photographs of buildings were incorporated into the HABS collection in 1985 by Laura Rupp and in 1986 by Deborah Fulton, HABS historians. A master list is available in the ~~MO-1800~~ records for MO-1800.

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HABS No. MO-1114

Addendum to
Bequet-Ribault House (Ribeau House)
St. Mary's (New Bourbon) Rd.
Ste. Genevieve
Ste. Genevieve County
Missouri

PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

Addendum to
Bequet-Ribault House
(Ribeau House)
St. Mary's Road
Ste. Genevieve
Ste. Genevieve County
Missouri

HABS No. MO-1114

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REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
BEQUET-RIBAULT HOUSE

HAB 8
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Location: St. Mary's or New Bourbon Road, Ste. Genevieve,
Ste. Genevieve County, Missouri 63670

Present Owner: Royce P. and Margaret A. Wilhauk

Present Use: Museum open to the public

Significance: The Bequet-Ribault House is one of three surviving examples of the distinctive upright log construction (poteaux en terre) in Ste. Genevieve, a National Historic Landmark Historic District. This post in ground construction was the predominant type in the colonial period. The three that survive--the Amoureux House (HABS No. MO-1113), the Vital St. Gemme Bauvais House I (HABS No. MO-1121), and this one--are made of cedar logs, and are large, well-constructed buildings. All three have impressive trussed roofs. This house preserved all the essentials of its original form in spite of later alterations.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: c. 1808. The house was built for Jean Baptiste Bequet (1751-1813). Though the house has been dated to before 1789 based on documents, tree-ring analysis suggests a date of 1808 or shortly thereafter.
2. Original and subsequent owners: Legal description:
All of Survey No. 215 and No. 213 in the town of Ste. Genevieve, beginning at the southeast corner at No. 215 on New Bourbon Road, then north 19 degrees 10 seconds west 79 feet to the beginning of the tract. Then north 19 degrees 10 seconds 323 feet to a point for the corner in the southwest corner of the property belonging to T. Zarinelli. Then north 75 degrees 45 seconds east 150 feet to a point for a corner, then north 19 degrees 10 seconds west 75 feet to a point for a corner, then north 75 degrees 45 seconds east 173 feet 9 inches to a point for a corner. Then south 18 degrees 30 seconds east 321 feet to a point for a corner. Then south 76 degrees 55 seconds east 440 feet to the beginning. Approximately 3.5 acres.
Chain of title:
 - a. 1789, estate of Jean Bte. Bequet and Cecile (Celeste?) Trudeau, deceased wife, 500 livres.
 - b. March 5, 1809, general deed from Jean Baptiste Bequet to his son Jean Bte. Bequet. Deed book A.
 - c. March 2, 1840, public sale of real estate of

- late Jean Bte. Bequet to Antoine Recole, a free man of color for \$405.00. Deed book E, page 320.
- d. May 21 1840, general warranty deed from Antoine Recole, a free man of color to Clarise, a free woman of color for \$405.00. Deed book E, page 321.
 - e. July 29, 1867, general warranty deed from Clarice, a free woman of color to John Ribeau for \$500.00. Deed book S, page 23C. The property remained in the Ribeau family, passing to Alonzo Ribeau.
 - f. July 23, 1973, division of property of Alonzo R. Ribeau, died intestate, to Jane L. Sawyer and Lasha Sawyer, her husband Bernard M. Ribeau, and Catherine Ribeau, his wife, John A. Ribeau, and Emily Ribeau, his wife, Odeal L. Lee, and the family of his deceased nephew, Edward T. Ribeau (Dorothy Ribeau, his wife, Edward Ribeau, Jr. his son, and Donna Gigler, his daughter). Deed book 206, page 195.
 - g. March 23, 1981, general warranty deed from the above heirs of Alonzo B. Ribeau to Royce P. Wilhauk and Margaret A. Wilhauk, his wife. Deed book 313, page 24.
3. Original plans and construction: Bequet's community of property was inventoried twice in the 1780s at the death of two different wives. In 1786, his estate contained a cabin "at the fork" and one arpent square lot in Ste. Genevieve on which was built an unfinished house. The second inventory was made in 1789 and contains the description of a post in the ground house. Lacking other details such as dimensions, it is not clear that the document refers to the present Bequet-Ribault house. The fabric of the house seems to suggest two different early periods not one. The survival of early documents testify to the presence of a house before the dates suggested by tree ring dating. The house might have originally been a one room dwelling that was altered to a two room house in the early 1800s by a partition wall of roughly hewn, closely spaced upright members with bousillage between the central chimney stack and the front wall of the house. The central limestone chimney is original to the house. The end chimney which was original was removed in the early part of the twentieth century and recently reconstructed.
4. Alterations and additions: The house was a four room dwelling prior to 1938 with a central stairway. Since its restoration in 1983-85, it has been returned to a two room structure and the stairway has been removed.

B. Historical Context:

Ste. Genevieve was one of the most important French colonial settlements in the mid-Mississippi valley, and the one that best preserves the architecture of that period. The Bequet-Ribault house is one of three surviving post in ground structures in the region and reflects the typical two-room plan of creole architecture.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This is an example of vertical log construction without a foundation, what the French called "poteaux en terre." Its plan, general form, and detail are characteristic of creole architecture.
2. Condition of fabric: restored, excellent.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: One story on an elevated cellar with a high attic, 50'-4" across the front by 35'-2" deep.
2. Foundations: No original foundation, but new (c. 1938) concrete floor in cellar and squeezed through posts. All the butts of the north side wall uprights are cased in later portland cement.
3. Walls: Vertical, hewn, cedar logs set in a trench and nailed to a plate, infilled with bouzillage.
4. Structural system, framing: Vertical log structure carrying a plate, hewn logs closely spaced, floor beams mortised into the vertical members (walls), hewn oak king-post trusses and longitudinal wind braces with mortise-construction and purlin supports.
5. Porches: A typical French colonial gallery on all four sides of the house. New restoration porch posts of red cedar. Secondary rafters extend over the gallery giving the characteristic double pitch to the roof.
6. Chimneys: Before restoration there was a remnant of a chimney at the center of the north side of the house as well as an intact, centrally located chimney with one fireplace facing southward. The remnant is believed older than the central chimney based on archaeological excavation and has been reconstructed.
7. Openings: Principal entrances near the center of both

long sides open into the larger room at the north half of the house. There are no secondary entrances.

Windows and shutters: The house was originally built with casement windows but were replaced with double-hung windows prior to 1938. During restoration, the windows were changed to the casement type. Several original board shutters with dovetailed battens are still in place.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: oak trusses, wood shingles.
- b. Cornice, eaves: No eave projection, exposed plate at eave line of the porch.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. First floor: A central partition divides the house into two rooms, each with a fireplace on the north wall.
 - b. Cellar: Unfinished.
 - c. Attic: Simple open space, floored but otherwise unfinished.
2. Stairways: Evidence of an original stairway to the attic survives in the north room. The stairway rose from west to east.
3. Flooring: Tongue-in-groove lumber set with hand-wrought flooring nails. Everywhere a floorboard crosses a floor joist it was thinned by hewing.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster walls with exposed ceiling beams, 4 1/4" x 8".

D. Site:

- 1. General setting and orientation: The house faces east on St. Mary's Road.
- 2. Historic landscape design: Silver maple trees and a redbud tree surround the house; a pecan tree borders the drive. New worm and palisadoed fences and stones outline the property. An old road that once cut through the area has been re-established so when viewed with the surroundings and outbuildings, the area presents itself as a small community.

3. Outbuildings: An outside bake oven, built 1985, and a shed, barn, and corn crib are on the grounds. The Lasource-Durand House is behind the Bequet-Ribault House and the proposed location for the Rozier House is an additional 60' away. The owners of the Bequet-Ribault House, the Wilhauks, built their residence based on the design of a Mississippi-Creole house at the rear of the property.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Early Views: Early photographs of the house, c.1900, are preserved in the Vincent J. Dunker Collection, owned by Mrs. Elmer L. Donze, 15 South Fourth Street, Ste. Genevieve, copy negatives owned by the University of Missouri-Columbia Ste. Genevieve Project.
- B. Interviews: Conducted with the owners, Royce and Margaret Wilhauk, 1982-1985.
- C. Bibliography:
 1. Primary and unpublished sources: Deed records in the Ste. Genevieve County Clerk's Office, County Courthouse. Other records in the Ste. Genevieve Archives (SGA), collected on microfilm, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri-Columbia.
 2. Secondary and published sources:

Ekberg, Carl J., Colonial Ste. Genevieve, An Adventure on the Mississippi Frontier (Gerald, Missouri: The Patrice Press, 1985).

Franzwa, Gregory M., The Story of Old Ste. Genevieve (St. Louis: The Patrice Press, 1967).

Guyette, Richard and Osmund Overby, "The First Tree Ring Dating of a Building in Missouri," Missouri Preservation News, VIII:2 (Fall 1984), pp. 1-2, 6,7.

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Porterfield, Neil H. "Ste. Genevieve, Missouri," in John Francis McDermott, editor, Frenchmen and French Ways in the Mississippi Valley (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1969), pp. 141-177.

Thurman, Melburn D., Building a House in Ste. Genevieve (Ste. Genevieve, Missouri: Pendragon's Press, 1984).

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State Highway Department, 1941).

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) team of the Rocky Mountain Regional Office, National Park Service, under the direction of Historical Architect Thomas G. Keohan. Documentation was carried out during the summer of 1985 at the HABS field office in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, by project supervisor Osmund Overby (University of Missouri-Columbia), project architects James Q. Marsh (Hemet, California), William D. Cesaletti (Keaau, Hawaii), and Terance A. Gruenhagen (North Dakota State University), and project historian Claudia A. Barbero (University of Missouri-Columbia).

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January 17, 1987

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U.S. Department of the Interior
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